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1. [Attack, Afghanistan] Taliban Kill 18 In Attack On Hotel

Saturday, June 23 2012

<http://www.military.com/daily-news/2012/06/23/taliban-kill-18-in-attack-on-hotel.html>

Heavily armed Taliban fighters have killed 18 people - mostly civilians - in an attack on a lakeside hotel just north of Kabul.

The insurgents killed the hotel security guards then began firing at guests.

Some of them escaped, others were held hostage as the attackers fought Afghan security forces for 12 hours. All five attackers were shot dead by midday yesterday.

A string of attacks this week suggest the Taliban is pushing hard with its summer offensive rather than waiting for international forces to leave in two years' time.

The attack on the hotel at Qargha Lake, a half-hour drive from the capital, was a reminder the Taliban can still hit close to the seat of the Afghan government.

Fourteen Afghan civilians, three security guards and a police officer died in the attack, said Mohammad Zahir of Kabul police.

Mr Zahir said: "Some of the guests jumped from the window into the hotel yard. They were hiding under trees or any safe place they could find. Three of the guests jumped into the lake and hid in the water."

The attackers were armed with machine guns, rocket-propelled grenades and explosive-laden vests.

They stormed the hotel before midnight and by mid-morning were still fighting Afghan forces backed by international troops. Black smoke rose from the two-storey hotel and Nato helicopters circled overhead.

Taliban spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid said they attacked the hotel because foreigners there were drinking alcohol and participating in other activities banned by Islam.

On Wednesday, a suicide bomber attacked US and Afghan forces at a checkpoint in a busy market in the east, killing 21 people, including three US soldiers. The same day, seven Afghan civilians were killed by a roadside bomb.

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2. [Attack, Afghanistan] Explosion Rocks Eastern Ghazni Province

Sunday, June 24 2012

<http://www.khaama.com/explosion-rocks-eastern-ghazni-province-939/>

According to local authorities in eastern Ghazni province at least 1 Afghan civilian was killed and another one was injured following an explosion in this province.

The incident took place in Ali Lala area in eastern Ghazni city after explosives planted in a cycle went off on Sunday afternoon.

Provincial governor spokesman Sabawoon said the explosive device was planted by anti-government armed militant groups and all the victims of the last are Afghan civilians.

In the meantime provincial hospital chief Baaz Mohammad said at least two people including an Afghan man and kid who were injured following the blast were taken to the hospital.

No group including the Taliban militants have so far claimed responsibility behind the incident. Taliban militants and other anti-government armed groups frequently use improvised explosive device as the weapon of their choice to target Afghan and coalition forces which normally leads to civilians casualties.

Ali Lalai area is considered to be a busy place in eastern Ghazni city and there are fears of increase in casualties as a result of today's blast.

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4. [Security, Pakistan] Massive Terror Bid Foiled In Quetta, 220Kg Explosives Recovered, 20 Suspects Arrested In Search Operation

Tuesday, June 26 2012

<http://www.lhrtimes.com/2012/06/26/massive-terror-bid-foiled-in-quetta-220kg-explosives-recovered-20-suspects-arrested-in-search-operation/>

The police and FC foiled a massive bid to target important government buildings as they recovered 220 kg of explosives and arrested two persons.

According to details, the police on late Monday night signaled to stop a suspected car at Zarghon Road heading towards Governor and Chief Minister Houses.

The car riders instead of stopping tried to flee but the police chased and held them in nearby location. During search of the vehicle 20kg of explosives, ball barring, nails, detonators and a remote control was recovered. The police arrested the two accused present in the car.

Upon information provided by the detainees the police conducted raid at a house in Saryab Mills area of Quetta and recovered 200kg of explosive material.

The nabbed culprits belong to a banned organization and in preliminary interrogation they admitted their involvement in several terrorism incidents in Quetta.

They claimed that their group carried out May 14 attack on FC convoy at Almo Chowk in Quetta. The accused said that they had prepared a special explosive laden vehicle to blow up FC Headquarters.

The arrested terrorists said that they were tasked to blow several key government buildings in the city but due to police and FC joint action the bid was foiled.

Meanwhile, police and FC during joint search operation in different localities of Shalkot and adjoining areas arrested 20 suspects and shifted them to undisclosed location for interrogation.

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5. [Security, Afghanistan] Weapons Cache Seized In Afghanistan

Tuesday, June 26 2012

<http://www.upiasia.com/Top-News/2012/06/26/Weapons-cache-seized-in-Afghanistan/UPI-43241340758261/>

Afghan-led forces seized two caches of chemicals, weapons and improvised explosive devices in the Ghanzi province, Coalition Forces announced Tuesday.

The caches, seized Monday in the Ab Band district with help from International Security Assistance Forces, contained 3,300 pounds of chemicals used to make homemade explosive devices, 120 IED electronic control devices, 30 anti-personnel mines and five IEDs, the U.S. Department of Defense said in a news release.

All of the materials were destroyed.

In other Afghanistan operations, a combined forces airstrike killed insurgent leader Musa, also known as Baitullah and Qalam, in the Waygal district of Nuristan province Tuesday. He was associated with both al-Qaida and Taliban forces, the release said.

Combined forces killed seven insurgents in three separate attacks Tuesday -- four in the Giyan district of Paktika province, one in the Bermal district of Paktika province and two in the Sayyidabad district of Wardak province.

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6. [Attack, Pakistan] Bomb In Railway Station Kills Five In Pakistan

Wednesday, June 27 2012

http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/A/AS_PAKISTAN?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT

Police say a bomb has exploded in a railway station in southwestern Pakistan, killing at least five people.

Police officer Qasim Salachi says at least 20 others were wounded in the bombing Wednesday at the station in Baluchistan province's Sibbi city.

Salachi says the bomb went off just minutes after a train pulled into the station, as passengers were buying food and drinks.

No group has claimed responsibility for the attack.

Baluchistan has experienced decades of violence at the hands of separatists who demand a greater share of the province's natural resources. It is also believed to be a base for many Afghan Taliban militants.

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7. [Attack, Pakistan] Bus Carrying Shiite Pilgrims In Pakistan Attacked With Bomb, Gunfire, 10 Killed

Thursday, June 28 2012

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/official-roadside-bomb-hits-paramilitary-convoy-in-pakistan-killing-7-soldiers/2012/06/28/gJQASPzz8V_story.html

Suspected Sunni Muslim militants attacked a bus carrying Shiite pilgrims in southwest Pakistan with a bomb and gunfire Thursday, killing at least 10 people, officials said.

In a separate incident, a roadside bomb hit a paramilitary convoy in the country's northwest, killing seven soldiers, a government official said.

Shiite Muslims are a minority in overwhelmingly Sunni Pakistan. Although most Sunnis and Shiites live peacefully together, extremists from both sides have targeted each other over the past three decades. In recent years, Sunni attacks on Shiites have been far more common. The Sunni-Shiite schism over the true heir to Islam's Prophet Muhammad dates back to the seventh century.

The bus that was attacked was carrying around 40 passengers and was traveling from Iran to Quetta, the capital of Pakistan's Baluchistan province, said senior local police officer Hamid Shakeel. Police are unsure whether the bus was hit by a car bomb or explosives buried next to the road, said Quetta police chief Mir Zubair Mahmood.

In addition to those killed, 25 people were wounded, said Mohammed Jafar, a doctor at the main hospital in Quetta. The wounded included four policemen who were escorting the bus, Shakeel said. Local TV video showed rescue workers using a crane to lift the blackened remains of the bus out of a ditch where it fell during the attack.

The roadside bomb attack on the paramilitary convoy occurred as it was passing through a bazaar in Bara town in the Khyber tribal area, where the military is waging a bloody battle against the Pakistani Taliban and their allies, said Iqbal Khan, a local political official. Two soldiers were wounded.

The Khyber offensive is one of many the military has launched in the semiautonomous tribal region along the Afghan border over the past few years. While the operations have helped reduce militant violence in Pakistan, attacks against the security forces and civilian targets are still common.



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The Taliban have said they are battling the government because of its support for the United States and to force officials to impose Islamic law in Pakistan.

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8. [Attack, Pakistan] Bomb Kills Eight Soldiers In Khyber Agency

Thursday, June 28 2012

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/islamabad/28-Jun-2012/bomb-kills-four-soldiers-in-khyber-agency-officials>

A remote-controlled bomb blast killed eight Pakistani troops and wounded three others Thursday in a restive Pakistani tribal region near the Afghan border, officials said. The incident took place in Bara, the main town in the lawless Khyber tribal region where Taliban and Al-Qaeda-linked militants have carved out strongholds. "At least eight troops including an officer were killed and three others wounded in a bomb explosion, targeting two vehicles of the paramilitary Frontier Corps (FC)," a spokesman for the force told AFP. The vehicles were on a routine patrol when attack happened, he added. Earlier, the spokesman had said that four troops were killed and six wounded. Local government official Nasir Khan also confirmed the new toll. Pakistan's seven tribal districts near the Afghan border are rife with homegrown insurgents and are strongholds of Taliban and Al-Qaeda operatives. Washington calls it the most dangerous region on Earth. Elsewhere in the northwestern Haripur district, three Pakistani men, allegedly arrested by security forces when they disappeared a year ago, were found dead Thursday after authorities ordered that they be produced alive in court. The case spotlights the plight of the "missing" in Pakistan, where judges are seeking to bring the powerful military and intelligence agencies to book over mass arrests of alleged terror suspects, who are never seen again. According to a preliminary autopsy report, the three men aged 30 to 35 were recently killed -- first poisoned, then their necks were broken. Their bodies were discovered in the district of Haripur, part of the northwest where the army has been fighting to put down a Taliban insurgency. "The dead bodies were recovered from three different places," Mohammad Ali Gandapur, district police chief, told AFP. He said police were investigating who killed them and why. Relatives of one of the victims told police he was arrested by security forces and had been missing for 11 months, Gandapur said. Television footage showed the bodies being taken away by ambulance, accompanied by relatives and rescue workers. A senior police official, speaking only on condition of anonymity, said the victims had been arrested by intelligence agencies. An unnamed relative said the victims were three of 170 missing people ordered to be produced court by judges in the northwestern capital Peshawar. Earlier this month, the high court in Peshawar ordered spy agencies, police and the provincial government to provide details on the status of 170 people. Mohammad Iqbal Mohmand, provincial deputy attorney general, told AFP that the court is hearing cases from 170 petitioners who want their relatives back and accuse the intelligence agencies of holding them illegally. The court will next hear the case on July 11. Pakistan's Supreme Court is also investigating the cases of missing people in the northwest and southwestern Baluchistan province, where the military has been accused of rights violations in its bid to put down a separatist insurgency. In February, seven men allegedly held by intelligence services appeared before the Supreme Court, more than a year and a half after being allegedly arrested in connection with terror attacks. It was an unprecedented development that challenged perceptions that Pakistan's feared Inter-Services Intelligence operates above the law.

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9. [Law Enforcement, Nigeria] Police Avert Explosion In Kano Mosque

Friday, June 22 2012

<http://www.thenationonlineng.net/2011/index.php/news-update/51270-police-avert-explosion-in-kano-mosque.html>

The prompt intervention of the anti-bomb squad drafted from Bompai Police headquarters averted what could have been the most deadly attack in the ancient city of Kano as police arrested three suspected terrorists for planting explosives inside a mosque on Friday.

The suspected terrorists had concealed the high volume Improvised Explosive Device (IED) in a plastic bag and neatly planted it inside the Fagge Mosque which has a capacity of about 15, 000 worshippers. Speaking on the incident on phone, Kano State Commissioner of Police, Ibrahim K. Idris, confirmed that three people suspected to be terrorists were arrested within the mosque premises.

“The person that planted the explosive came inside the mosque before the prayer time. He concealed the explosive in a plastic can, dropped it, sat down, picked a Qu’ran and pretended to be reciting the Qu’ran. After some minutes, he went outside, came in again, sat in the same position and pretended to be reading the Holy Book. After a while, he went outside, abandoned the plastic can and never returned. At this point, the mosque committee suspected the plastic can and alerted the police. When the anti-bomb squad arrived the mosque, they brought the plastic can outside, checked the content and discovered it was an explosive; and they immediately detonated it,” he stated.

“The police boss, however, advised residents to be vigilant and report any suspicious movement or strange item dumped anywhere to the police, pointing out that, “people should be very careful even in the mosques and churches. Worshipers should not be allowed to come inside places of worship with strange materials,” Idris advised.

Alhaji Kabiru Isah, who worshiped at the mosque, gave a graphic account of the incident.

“It was by Allah’s grace that we were saved. People were already rushing into the mosque as prayer time was fast approaching when one of the mosque committee members observed a polythene bag abandoned inside the mosque. He was so suspicious of the content of the polythene bag; and he immediately raised alarm. The police was informed. At this point, three men outside the mosque who thought the bomb had exploded shouted Allahu Akbar (God is great). They were immediately identified as the masterminds of the evil act and the police arrested them with the help of the worshipers. I thank Allah for saving the lives of his servants. It would have been another tragic story; and only God knows what their motive and mission were. I believe they are detractors who simply want to cause confusion and commotion in the state, but Allah exposed them,” Isah told our correspondent.

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10. [Security, Kenya] Fifteen Kg Explosives Powder Recovered In Mombasa

Friday, June 22 2012

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201206230177.html>

Police in Mombasa yesterday recovered a powdered substance suspected to be used in the manufacturing of explosives. An Iranian terror suspect arrested at a hotel in Nairobi early this week led police officers to unearth the powder along Mama Ngina drive next Nyali Golf Club. The 15kg powder, which was wrapped in two plastic bags, is suspected to be used for manufacturing explosives for a series of criminal activities in the country.

Police detectives and bomb experts from Nairobi recovered the powder that Coast police boss Aggrey Adoli said will be taken to Government Chemist for testing. "Our officers in Nairobi arrested two terror suspects of Iranian origin. The two then revealed to the police that they had hidden some equipment and materials in Mombasa. They told the police that they intended to use them to commit various criminal activities in the country," said Adoli at police headquarters.

Adoli said the suspect had to be flown to Mombasa on Wednesday alongside the criminal investigating officers and bomb experts to help in the search. "He will be flown back today to join his colleague under police custody in Nairobi for further interrogation concerning this powder and others if any," he said.

But sources said the suspect will be leading police in a series of investigations and that he was headed to Lamu from Mombasa yesterday on a similar mission before he and the other compatriot are arraigned in court.

The suspect according to Adoli had signaled cooperation by giving them crucial information that will lead to total investigations on the motive of the two. This happened at a time when bomb experts and Anti Terror Police Unit officers were still scanning the two containers nabbed on Wednesday by police at Consolbase Container Freight station in Changamwe is ongoing.

The officers began to comb the container after Mombasa senior magistrate Joyce Gandani issued an order on an application by ATPU who suspected the container had explosives and that they wanted it searched. Coast ATPU boss Elijah Rop led a team of detectives including international bomb experts from the FBI that two containers had been hidden at the said CFS.

According to one of the ATPU officers who sought anonymity, "FBI tipped Kenya Police Intelligence over the 40-foot container at Consolbase CFS and we moved in swiftly to intercept. Details of the origin and destination are still unknown." Adoli however downplayed the reports that the container had explosives and said that police were on a day to day random search at all the CFSs. "Police have been there for last three weeks doing the random check as part of intensified surveillance against terror. There is no cause for alarm because it's a normal process," Adoli said.

Eyebrows were raised over the container search when journalists, who attempted to get to scene were barred by KK security guards under the direction of ATPU boss Elijah Rop who was present.

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11. [Special Interest, Nigeria] Boko Haram Promises The Bloodiest Month Yet For Nigerian Christians

Saturday, June 23 2012

<http://www.thecuttingedgenews.com/index.php?article=74442&pageid=20&pagename=Security>

There is alarm in the Christian community in Nigeria after the terrorist group Boko Haram, which has continued its attacks on Christians, issued a threat to carry out new attacks in order to make June "the bloodiest month for Christians." The Islamic sect has vowed to purge northern Nigeria of Christians in an effort to eventually impose Muslim religious law over the entire country.

The group said it has trained about 300 suicide bombers ready to attack the Christian churches in the states of Plateau and Kaduna (southern Nigeria). On Sunday June 17, Boko Haram conducted a series of coordinated car bomb attacks at churches in Kaduna in which scores of Christians were killed. Fighting between Christians and Muslims ensued in Kaduna, and then later in northeastern city of Damaturu. The army has struggled to maintain order in the region, as President Goodluck Jonathan has been increasingly criticized for his apparent ineffectuality. Boko Haram, for its part, says it has recruited the sons and daughters of Muslims killed during the recent sectarian conflict by providing weapons and bombs manufactured in Mauritania and Somalia.

Boko Haram has announced further attacks on government buildings in the states of Kano, Kaduna, Yobe and Gombe, as well as a demonstrative major attack on the Federal Capital territory, ie in the capital Abuja, to show the world that "the Nigerian security forces will not be able to stop us."

In past weeks, authorities ordered a curfew to restore order, as happened in the states of Kaduna and Yobe, with varying success. The Christian churches ask for more protection in five states in northern and central Nigeria, object of attacks in the past. In a statement sent to Fides, the NGO Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW), calls on the authorities "to respond to these threats, strengthening the protection of innocent civilians, to defuse any risk of retaliation."

According to the Fides news service, a local non-governmental organization reported "Boko Haram has once again shown its links with Al Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and al Shabaab militia in Somalia," therefore "it is a phenomenon that goes beyond the borders of Nigeria: International cooperation is essential to destroy sponsors, supporters and the training network."

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12. [Security, Somalia] Weekly Security Roundup

Saturday, June 23 2012

http://somalireport.com/index.php/post/3468/Weekly_Security_Roundup

Insecurity across different regions of Somalia this week resulted in the deaths of at least 41 people and 33 others were injured. The incidents ranged from the killing of a well-known businessman in Mogadishu to young teenage boys who were shot and killed in Mogadishu to the murder of civilians in northern Somalia. Al-Shabaab fighters killed a senior Somali military commander at Elasha Biyaha. A suicide bomber killed himself and injured three civilians in Afgoye district. ASWJ claimed to have killed five militants in south-western Somalia. The incidents occurred mainly in the regions of Bay, Banadir, Galgadud, Gedo, Hiiraan, Lower-Jubba, Lower-Shabelle, Mudug and Sool.

LOWER-SHABELLE: Al-Shabaab Carried Out Suicide Blast in Afgoye

June 16, Afgoye – An al-Shabaab suicide bomber rammed a car packed with explosives into one of the government bases in Afgoye district outside the capital on Saturday according to witnesses and police forces in Lower-Shabelle region. Al-Shabaab said its suicide attacker killed dozens of TFG and African Union forces, but the TFG forces in the district denied it and said the blast caused only three injuries.



BANAADIR: Three Civilians Injured in Explosion in Mogadishu

June 17, Mogadishu – Three civilians were injured after an explosion hit Suuq-bacaad market, the second largest market in the capital on Sunday according to witnesses. Muhiyadin Hassan Jurus, a TFG official in Yaqshid district in Mogadishu, said the explosion was caused by car loaded with explosives. He said civilians were injured, and they have arrested locals suspecting links with al-Shabaab.

BANAADIR: Hand Grenade in Mogadishu Injured One Civilian

June 20, Mogadishu – One civilian was injured after unknown armed men hurled a hand grenade into an office in Yaqshid district of Banaadir region witnesses and locals said. The culprits managed to escape from the scene.

HIIRAAN: TFG Soldiers Shot and Killed Teenage Boy in Beledweyne

June 21, Beledweyne – TFG soldiers in Beledweyne of Hiiraan region has shot and killed a young teenage boy after they said he was armed with hand grenades and a pistol and planned to commit terrorist activities against the TFG and ENDF in the town. Government officials said that the suspect tried to run away from the government soldiers who killed him.

HIIRAAN: RCIED Explosion in Central Somali Left One Dead

UNCLASSIFIED

June 21, Beledweyn – One person was killed and three others were injured after a remote controlled explosion rocked in Beledweyn, the provincial headquarters of Hiiraan region in central Somalia. The TFG and Ethiopian national forces reached the scene and began security operations, arresting more than 15 locals suspecting links with al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attack.

SOMALIA REPORT WEEKLY SECURITY ROUNDUP									
Date	Region	Location	Deaths	Injuries	Casualties	Attack Type	Attacker	Target	Victim
16-Jun	Gedo	Luuq	3	4	7	Battle	al-Shabaab	ASWJ	ASWJ, & al-Shabaab
16-Jun	Mudug	Galkayo	0	2	2	Hazards	Fire	Civilian	Civilian
16-Jun	Lower-Shabelle	Afgoye	1	3	4	Suicide	al-Shabaab	TFG	Civilian
16-Jun	Galgaduud	Gellinsoor	1	1	2	Light Fire	Gunmen	Gunmen	Gunmen
16-Jun	Bay	Qansah-dhere	6	5	11	Battle	al-Shabaab	TFG &ENDF	TFG & al-Shabaab
17-Jun	Banaadir	Yaqshid	0	3	3	Explosion	al-Shabaab	TFG	Civilian
17-Jun	Lower-Jubba	Afmadow	7	0	7	Battle	TFG	al-Shabaab	al-Shabaab
18-Jun	Mudug	Hobyo	1	1	2	Battle	pirates	pirates	pirates
18-Jun	Banaadir	Kaaraan	1	0	1	Execution	Gunmen	Civilian	Civilian
19-Jun	Gedo	Barwaaqo village	6	0	6	Battle	al-Shabaab	ASWJ	AL-Shabaab&ASWJ
20-Jun	Sool	Gawso-weyne	3	3	6	Shooting	Gunmen	Civilian	Civilian
20-Jun	Lower-Shabelle	Qoryooley	1	3	4	Battle	al-Shabaab	Civilian	Civilian&al-Shabaab
20-Jun	Banaadir	Yaqshid	0	1	1	Hand Grenade	Unknown	Civilian	Civilian
20-Jun	Banaadir	Suuqa-Xoolaha	3	1	4	Shooting	Unknown	Civilian	Civilian
20-Jun	Hiiraan	Beledweyn	1	0	1	Shooting	TFG	Suspect	Suspect
21-Jun	Gedo	Beled-hawo	0	3	3	battle	al-Shabaab	TFG	TFG & al-Shabaab
21-Jun	Hiiraan	Beledweyn	1	3	4	Explosion	Unknown	TFG &ENDF	Civilian
22-Jun	Lower-Shabelle	Elasha-biyaha	6	0	6	Battle	al-Shabaab	TFG	TFG & al-Shabaab
	TOTAL		41	33	74				

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13. [Attack, Nigeria] Bomb Explodes In Nigeria Capital, No Casualties

Saturday, June 23 2012

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/06/23/us-nigeria-bomb-idUSBRE85M03020120623>

A bomb exploded outside a nightclub popular with foreigners and wealthy Nigerians in the capital Abuja late on Friday but no one was injured, an emergency agency said. The blast shattered windows in nearby buildings and damaged six luxury vehicles, said an emailed statement from National Emergency Management Agency spokesman Yushau Shuaib, sent on Saturday. Authorities suspected the bomb was planted on a tree outside the Kryxtal Lounge club, the statement added.

Islamist sect Boko Haram has killed hundreds in bomb and gun attacks in its insurgency against President Goodluck Jonathan's government. Its assaults usually focus on government and religious targets in the largely Muslim north but it has struck the capital several times, including a suicide bomb attack on a U.N. building last year that killed 24 people. Jonathan sacked his defense minister and national security adviser on Friday, but gave no reason for the move.

A state of emergency and a military crackdown on the sect across the north have failed to quell the insurgency. At least 92 people were killed in violence between Muslims and Christians in the northern city of Kaduna last week, sparked by suicide bombs blasts at churches.

Jonathan drew criticism for travelling to Brazil for a climate change conference at the height of the religious violence in Kaduna.

Boko Haram, which is loosely modeled on the Afghan Taliban, wants to carve out an Islamic state in northern Nigeria and is seen as the country's biggest security threat.



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14. [Security, Kenya] Kenyan Police Seize Bomb Explosive In Nairobi

Sunday, June 24 2012

<http://english.cri.cn/6966/2012/06/24/2561s708043.htm>

Kenyan police on Saturday seized 6 kilograms of dangerous explosive materials and nine detonators in a Nairobi residential estate, a regional police commander confirmed. Nairobi Provincial Police Officer Anthony Kibuchi told Xinhua that the bomb explosives were dropped by three men on a paper bag containing nine items and upon search they found explosives in flour substance in Kawangare estate.

"At 1300hrs in Kawangware, Muslim area, three men dropped a paper bag containing nine items written Magnum Buster Danger Explosives in flour substance. This happened when the suspects saw police officers on patrol," Kibuchi told Xinhua by telephone.

He said the three managed to escape arrest but bomb experts confirmed later that the materials are used for making Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) which Al-Shabaab have been using to carry out attacks in northern region, Nairobi and Mombasa.

"The three people managed to escape but our bomb experts have confirmed the materials are used for making IED. We need to be extra vigilant," Kibuchi said.

The incident came as the authorities are interrogating two foreigners after being found with dangerous explosive materials.

The Iranians were arrested on Tuesday night after checking into a hotel in Nairobi and later flown to the coastal city of Mombasa for interrogation.

The U.S. government has also warned its citizens of an impending terrorism attack in Kenya's coastal city of Mombasa which is frequented by foreigners.

In a statement from its embassy in Nairobi, Washington ordered Americans to vacate Mombasa as it also suspended all U.S. government travel to the port city until July 1, over terrorism fears.

"U.S. private citizens are not subject to the same restrictions but should consider this information in their travel planning. All U.S. government travel to Mombasa is suspended until July," the statement said released on Saturday.

"This is to alert all U.S. citizens in Kenya, or planning to travel to Kenya in the near future," the American embassy said in its third alert this year of imminent threats of terror attacks.

Kibuchi said security had been stepped up and appealed to city residents to be extra vigilant and take security measures seriously, regardless of their status in society.

The latest development came as some of Al-Shabaab suspects have reportedly entered the east African nation for fear of being killed by Kenyan soldiers in Somalia, throwing security agencies into high alert.

The police have also admitted that despite a boost in security the threat remained, urging shopping malls to remain vigilant and to "do more" to prevent attacks.

Police particularly warned against the laxity in the screening of cars for explosives at all shopping malls and any business or social gatherings with at least 10 people at any given moment that these might be vulnerable to attacks.

Kenya sent troops into Somalia to battle Al-Shabaab rebels in October 2011 after several attacks, including the kidnapping of a French woman and a British tourist and the killing of her husband damaged its key tourism industry.

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15. [Attack, Kenya] Mombasa Blast Deaths Rise To Three, Suspect Arrested

Monday, June 25 2012

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/06/25/us-kenya-attack-idUSBRE85O0LO20120625>

The death toll from Sunday's explosion in a Mombasa night club rose to three and Kenyan police said on Monday they had arrested a suspect, a man in his twenties who was injured in the blast and taken to hospital.

The cause of the explosion was not yet known, police said, but there have been several attacks in the east African port city, popular with Kenyan and foreign holidaymakers, since Kenya sent troops into Somalia in October to crush Islamist militants.

A day before the blast the U.S. embassy warned of an imminent attack on Mombasa and urged all its staff to leave. [ID:nL5E8HO2DO] It also said it had suspended travel to the city by embassy staff until July 1. [ID:nL5E8HN2F1]

The suspect now under arrest was taken to hospital after suffering abdominal and leg injuries in the blast, but early on Monday police handcuffed him to his hospital bed and said they needed to question him further.

"One of those wounded people is assisting us with investigations because he is providing contradictory statements. He is being held as a suspect," said Aggrey Adoli, the Coast regional police chief.

At least 15 people have been killed in grenade attacks in Nairobi and Mombasa, including a security guard at a Mombasa night club. [ID:nL5E8GFMQ8] There have also been grenade and gun attacks in northeast Kenya near the Somali border.

Kenya has blamed the attacks on al Shabaab, a Somali rebel group which formally merged with al Qaeda this year and has declared war on Kenya because of its incursion into Somalia.

On Wednesday Kenyan police arrested two Iranians after seizing chemicals they suspected were going to be used to make explosives in Mombasa.

Ahmad Mohammed and Sayed Mousavi were charged at the Nairobi High Court on Monday with being in possession of 15 kilograms of explosives and preparing to commit a felony. They denied the charges and were detained until Wednesday, when the judge will rule on their bail application.

One man was killed immediately in Sunday's blast, and two of the eight people injured died later in hospital - a nine-year-old boy with shrapnel in his chest and thigh, and a man.

A crowd had gathered at the night club, situated in a residential area, to watch the Euro 2012 football quarter-final between England and Italy.

TOURISM IMPACT

Tourism organizations criticized the warning by the U.S. embassy, echoing the Kenyan government which said on Sunday it considered the warning an act of "economic sabotage" and urged the embassy to reverse it.

Tourism, one of Kenya's major foreign earners alongside tea and horticulture, earned a record 98 billion shillings (\$1.19 billion) in 2011, when visitors from Britain and the United States topped the tourist numbers.

There are signs that tourism revenue could drop this year as the euro zone crisis hits confidence in key markets and foreign governments issue travel alerts over the threat from Somali militants, the government and tour operators have said.

"The latest blast has created even more fear, but still the American embassy, knowing too well how delicate this industry is, should have sought consultations before issuing such an advisory," said Mohammed Hersi, chairman of the umbrella group, the Mombasa and Coast Tourist Association.

"This is a very small country with a small economy. When you give out such an alert in a very sensational manner, it does nothing but hurt the country's economy."

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16. [Attack, Somalia] Roadside Bomb Targets Turks In Mogadishu

Monday, June 25 2012

http://somalireport.com/index.php/post/3470/Roadside_Bomb_Targets_Turks_in_Mogadishu

A roadside bomb targeting a Turkish convoy wounded one civilian, a young boy, in Mogadishu's Waaberi district, according to witnesses who spoke to Somalia Report.

"It was a bomb planted alongside the road. Turkish workers, a convoy and soldiers were passing through the street when the blast detonated. One boy was slightly hurt from the incident but we don't have any more casualties," said Liban Abdullah, a resident who spoke to Somalia Report shortly after the blast.

Another witness, Faduma Mohamed Edban, verified the incident.

"I was on a bus while heading home when we heard the blast of the explosion. Everyone was shocked. The scene near the street was smoking for a few minutes. Luckily there were no casualties and the place was full of government troops after the explosion," Faduma Edban told Somalia Report.

Faduma said the police and soldiers refused to allow personal and commercial vehicles to use the street immediately after the incident, but civilians were able to walk alongside the highway.

No group has yet claimed responsibility for the attack but locals believe al-Shabaab, the hardline Islamist group battling for control of Somalia, likely conducted the attack. The group confirmed they carried out a number of roadside attacks, assassinations and suicide bombings in Mogadishu in recent months.

Other news outlets claimed it was a suicide bombing.

Turkey is one of the foremost donor countries to Somalia since the United Nations declared famine in parts of the Horn of Africa last year. During the last nine months, Somalia has seen a high number of visits by Turkish officials. In August of 2011, the Turkish Prime Minister visited the capital. In March, a high ranking Turkish delegation visited Mogadishu and the ambassador visited Puntland in April. In September of 2011, Turkey funded hundreds of scholarships for Somali students. For more on Turkey's involvement in Somalia, please see Mubark's Musings.

In turn, al-Shabaab has repeatedly accused Turkey of misleading the people of Somalia saying it is working for its own interests rather than those of the Somali people and as a counter-balance to Iran, which is also active in the country.

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17. [Security, Nigeria] Security Operatives Avert Bomb Blast In Jos

Monday, June 25 2012

<http://www.channelstv.com/home/2012/06/25/two-explosives-discovered-in-jos/>

The military Special Task Force in Jos said two explosives planted in a residential area were discovered, late Sunday night but both devices were detonated by men of the Anti-Bomb Squad.

A statement by the Media and Information Officer of the Special Task Force, Captain Salisu Mustapha, said residents of the area discovered the strange objects and alerted the police.

“On June 24, 2012 by 09.30p.m, two improvised explosive devices were found in Tudun Wada Area of Jos North Local Government Area,” it read.

According to Captain Mustapha, one of the explosives was planted by the fence of a residence in the area, while the other one was planted under a parked vehicle.

The spokesman said both devices were detonated by men of the Anti-Bomb Squad of the state Police Command.

He explained that no casualty was recorded as a result of the explosives, while the situation in the area and the metropolis was calm.

Mustapha enjoined the residents to be vigilant and report any suspicious person, activities or objects within their area to the security agencies.

The spokesman of the state police command, Mr. Abuh Emmanuel, a Deputy Superintendent of Police, also confirmed the incident.

“Yes, two improvised explosive devices were discovered in Tudun Wada on Sunday and they have been detonated by men of the anti-bomb squad of the command without any casualty.

“No arrest has been made but investigations have commenced to unravel those behind the dastardly act,” Emmanuel said.

Police authority in the state, last Thursday warned of plans by some terrorists to launch bomb attacks in Jos on Sunday.

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18. [Special Interest,] African Terrorist Groups Starting To Cooperate

Monday, June 25 2012

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-06-25/african-terrorist-groups-starting-to-cooperate-u-s-says.html>

Three African terrorist groups are seeking to “coordinate and synchronize” their operations, the head of the U.S. military’s Africa Command said.

Army General Carter Ham said al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, al-Shabaab in Somalia, and Boko Haram in Nigeria are increasingly trying to work together on the African continent.

“Each of these organizations is, by itself, a dangerous and worrisome threat,” Ham yesterday told a leadership seminar of the Africa Center for Strategic Studies, a Defense Department center. “But what really concerns me is that the three organizations are seeking to coordinate and synchronize their efforts.”

The militant Sunni Muslim groups are starting to share funds, training and explosive material to assist each other’s efforts to establish Islamic regimes, he said.

While the coordination among terrorist groups in Africa is a concern, there’s little evidence so far that such groups are targeting the U.S. homeland, said Rick “Ozzie” Nelson, a counter-terrorism specialist and former Navy helicopter pilot who is now at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington.

“Right now, these groups are not threatening the U.S. homeland in any way comparable to what al-Qaeda was doing three or four or five years ago,” before drone strikes weakened the militant group’s core, Nelson said.

Al-Shabaab is focused on creating an Islamic state in Somalia. Boko Haram wants an Islamic state in Nigeria, and al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb seeks Islamic governments throughout the region, he said.

The focus of the groups “is quite local and regional at this point,” as opposed to any collaborative effort to strike the U.S., said Chester Crocker, a professor at Georgetown University in Washington who was assistant secretary of state for African affairs in President Ronald Reagan’s administration.

As drone strikes decimate the core al-Qaeda group in Pakistan and a U.S.-backed government offensive in Yemen targets al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, U.S. counter-terrorism officials increasingly are turning their attention to a swath of northern Africa from Somalia to Mauritania and south into Nigeria, according to administration officials.

It includes both populated areas and wild, ungoverned spaces such as northern Mali, which one official compared to Afghanistan in the 1990’s.

Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb is now “operating essentially unconstrained” in a large portion of Mali, Ham said. With an effective safe haven in Mali, the al-Qaeda affiliate “is an organization of growing concern,” he said.

Recent White House meetings on counter-terrorism have been devoted largely to northern Africa, according to one administration official who participates in them. The meetings have included discussions on protecting Nigerian oil production and exports, developing local counter-terrorism programs, and finding personnel with the necessary language skills, with Nigeria’s Ibo at the top of the list, said the official, who requested not to be identified because classified matters are discussed at the meetings.

“From a pure counter-terrorism perspective, Africa is a growing concern for sure,” said Nelson of CSIS. “Terrorists need ungoverned spaces. They need resources.”

They have both in parts of northern Africa, where the collapse of Muammar Qaddafi’s regime in Libya has sent aging shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles, rocket-propelled grenades and other weapons into terrorists’ hands in places where the absence of effective governments has created safe havens for terrorist groups.

The ability of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb to funnel weapons and training to local militant groups such as Boko Haram has “created a witch’s brew of opportunities for local terrorist groups,” said Bruce Hoffman, director of the Center for Peace and Security Studies at Georgetown University.

“Its ability to distribute largess and train other groups has put it in a position of being a power broker,” Hoffman said of the al-Qaeda affiliate in northern Africa. “It gives al-Qaeda the opportunity, even while the center is being pulverized, to expand the movement on the periphery and extend its longevity.”

Even so, the U.S. isn’t planning to field a larger military presence on the continent, Ham said. The U.S. has about 2,000 troops in Djibouti, and otherwise has no large presence.

The headquarters for Africa Command, one of six regionally focused combatant commands, isn’t even in Africa. It’s in Stuttgart, Germany.

“A large permanent presence in the continent of Africa is not, I think, what any of us desire,” Ham, Africa Command’s second commander since its creation in 2007, said at the seminar, which was held in Arlington, Virginia, for an audience primarily representing African nations.

The U.S. military can be more helpful by collecting and passing on information to local leaders, with the consent of host nations, Ham said.

“We’re better off when it is Africans leading, with a little bit of training and support equipping from us,” Ham told the House Armed Services Committee at a Feb. 29 hearing.

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19. [Attack, Nigeria] Nine Injured As Explosion Rocks Bauchi

Tuesday, June 26 2012

<http://www.thenationonline.net/2011/index.php/news-update/51672-nine-injured-as-explosion-rocks-bauchi.html>

Nine persons were on Sunday night injured in an explosion that rocked Bayan-Gari, a popular area in the Bauchi metropolis.

The Secretary of the Bauchi State Red Cross Society, Abubakar Adamu, told our reporter yesterday that the injured people had been taken to the hospital.

No group has claimed responsibility for the explosion that partially damaged an uncompleted church.

A blast occurred in one of the brothels in the area on May 7 during which three men and a woman were injured. The victims included the man suspected to have brought the explosive to the brothel.

Bauchi State Police Commissioner Mohammed Ladan confirmed the incident.

He said: "It's true; there was an explosion yesterday (Sunday) at Bayan-Gari about 9:30 pm. Nobody died. Those injured were taken to the hospital and are receiving treatment. The person who planted the Improvised Explosive Device (IED) is yet to be arrested."

Efforts to speak with some of the victims at the Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Teaching Hospital, Bauchi (ATBUTH) were not successful, as the medical workers denied our reporter access to them.

The police commissioner denied that a suspect was arrested on Sunday about 4pm with IED while attempting to detonate it at JIBWIS Secondary School, Bayan-Gari when the Islamic students were receiving lessons.

His words: "Nobody was arrested yesterday with IED. If somebody was arrested, I should have been informed as the police commissioner."

Security has been tightened in churches in Bauchi. Investigation showed that most of the churches that usually attracted large worshipers were manned by 30 armed mobile policemen.

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20. [Attack, Somalia] Roadside Bomb Hits Ethiopian Troops In Beledweyne, Central Somalia

Thursday, June 28 2012

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201206290029.html>

Witnesses say a roadside bomb hit Ethiopian soldiers in Somalia's central town of Beledweyne, causing heavy casualties.

According to the local residents, who spoke with Shabelle Media via phone under anonymity, said the blast was targeted on Ethiopian soldiers along with Somali troops who were passing a village in eastern part of Beledweyne town early hours on Thursday.

Following the attack which was used a remote-controlled line mine, Somali and Ethiopian forces opened fire at nearby civilians, but no deaths reported so far.

Casualties on Somali and Ethiopian troops are yet to be established. The Ethiopian military rarely comments on its ongoing operations.

Ahmed Abdulla Inji, a TFG security official in the town, confirmed the explosion to Shabelle Media, adding that the attack Ethiopian and TFG forces began a massive security operation in the area, taking several suspects into custody.

Tensions were very high, and many security personnel lined the streets, restricting the movements of residents and vehicles for a while after the attack. No one or group has so far claimed responsibility for the attack.

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21. [Attack, Nigeria] Police Post Attacked In Northern Nigeria

Friday, June 29 2012

<http://www.news24.com/Africa/News/Police-post-attacked-in-northern-Nigeria-20120629>

Militants armed with guns and explosives attacked a police station in north-eastern Nigeria late Thursday, police said, amid a wave of similar attacks blamed on Boko Haram Islamists.

The attackers stormed the police post in Adamawa state's town of Gulak, which is roughly 200km from the capital Yola, state police spokesperson Nemuel Yoila told AFP.

"The police station was attacked by a group of gunmen who threw explosives into the police station and opened fire," Yoila said, adding that the building was destroyed by the subsequent blaze.

"Details are still sketchy, so it is still not clear if there were casualties," he added.

The spokesperson did not say who was responsible for the raid, but the attack was similar to those carried out by Boko Haram, which has repeatedly hit north-eastern Nigeria and has frequently targeted the police.

In March, also in Adamawa state, the extremist Islamist group launched a bomb and gun attack on a police installation in the town of Shuwa, killing three officers.

Days later, another police officer was killed when suspected Islamists bombed a police post in the town of Demsa.

On Tuesday, three policemen were shot dead in neighbouring Taraba state when gunmen attacked a regional police headquarters in the town of Wukari.

Boko Haram is responsible for more than 1 000 deaths across northern and central Nigeria since the middle of 2009.

The group has previously said it wants to create an Islamic state in Nigeria's mainly Muslim north, but its stated demands and grievances have varied widely as its insurgency has intensified in recent months.

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22. [Attack, Iraq] Bomb Blast In Iraqi Market Kills 13

Friday, June 22 2012

<http://english.al-akhbar.com/content/bomb-blast-iraqi-market-kills-eight>

At least 13 people were killed and more than 100 wounded when two roadside bombs exploded in quick succession at a popular market on the northern outskirts of Iraq's capital on Friday, police and hospital sources said.

The attack was the latest in a wave of bombings this month that have targeted mainly Shia Muslim pilgrims, reviving concerns of renewed sectarian violence.

The first explosion struck a main market area of Husseiniya - a predominately Shia area on the edge of Baghdad - where people were shopping for groceries and other goods.

The second blast occurred shortly after in the same area, as security forces and people gathered to tend to the injured.

"Fruit and vegetables have been scattered everywhere. Some children were wounded," said Mudhaffar Khalaf, a policeman at the scene. "We have started to evacuate the injured people."

The decade-long US occupation of Iraq, which officially ended when US troops withdrew from the country last December, has left the country deeply divided.

While overall violence in Iraq has dropped since the peak of sectarian fighting in 2006-07, recent bombings demonstrate the continued fragility of the state.

More than 150 people have been killed since June 13, according to official figures.

On Monday, a suicide bomber killed at least 15 people mourning at a Shia funeral in the northern Iraqi city of Baquba.

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23. [Attack, Yemen] Landmines Kill 73 People In Abyan

Monday, June 25 2012

<http://yemenpost.net/Detail123456789.aspx?ID=3&SubID=5587&MainCat=3>

The death toll resulting from the explosions of landmines planted in the southern province of Abyan by al-Qaeda-linked militants has risen to 73, said a military official on Sunday.

Before the militants were driven out from their key strongholds in Abyan two weeks ago, the militant laid thousands of landmines aiming to ambush and retaliate from the armed and security forces that and forced them to flee their posts.

A Ministry of Defense website quoted Colonel Saeed Ali Mushal, the head of an engineering military unit tasked with clearing the mines from Abyan, as saying that the technicians managed to clear 3119 landmines from the towns of Zinjubar, the provincial capital, Ja'ar and Shuqra.

Mushal revealed that at least 73 people were killed in landmines explosions, of whom 23 were military personnel including two high-ranking officers from the engineering teams.

Previous statement had stated that at least 35 people were killed in landmines blasts in ten days.

Explosions of landmines are being heard every day in Zinjubar with an average of three to four mines going off daily. These blasts leave some people killed and others wounded, according to Mushal.

Mushal noted that the mines laid in Abyan were locally-made, pointing out that the militants used motorcycles' batteries, gas cylinders, tanks' and artillery's shells,..etc, in making them.

For his part, Colonel al-Kadhari Mohammed al-Tali, the Deputy Chief of the Engineering Division in the Southern Military Area, told the state-run 26 news website that six mines detection teams, a demining team, and two teams to disarm the unexploded shells and missiles, in addition to four military engineering teams, have been sent to Abyan to deal with mines and explosives.

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24. [Attack, Iraq] Iraq Blast Kills Nine Teen Soccer Players, Fans

Tuesday, June 26 2012

<http://english.al-akhbar.com/content/iraq-blast-kills-nine-teen-soccer-players-fans>

Nine young soccer players and fans were killed when a bomb exploded near a pitch in southern Iraq, health officials said, in the latest of a wave of attacks by suspected Al-Qaeda linked militants aimed at stoking sectarian tensions.

Neither Shia nor Sunnis were spared the violence, with the explosion hitting a predominantly Shia area in the city of Hilla, while another roadside bomb killed five people near a pet shop in a largely Sunni area in the northern city of Baquba, police and hospital sources said.

In Hilla, a bomb attached to a minibus exploded near a field where two youth teams had just finished a game, said police and hospital sources.

The dead and injured soccer players and fans were aged between 15 and 20, said Abdul Amir al-Jibouri, a media manager for the health department in Babil province. More than 30 others were injured, he added.

Hilla is 100km south of Baghdad while Baquba is 65km northeast of capital.

More than 140 people have been killed in June in bombings, breaking a brief lull in violence. Violence in Iraq has fallen since the peak of sectarian fighting in 2006-07, but insurgents remain capable of lethal attacks.

Iraq's al-Qaeda wing has claimed some of the recent bombings against Shia as it tries to stoke tensions.

At least 13 people were killed and more than 100 wounded on Friday when two roadside bombs exploded in a crowded market in a mainly Shia area of Baghdad. A suicide bomber killed 15 mourners at a Shia funeral in Baquba on Monday last week.

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25. [Attack, Iraq] Roadside Bombs Kill 11 In Iraq

Wednesday, June 27 2012

<http://english.al-akhbar.com/content/roadside-bombs-kill-eight-iraq>

Three roadside bombs killed 11 people in Iraq on Wednesday, security and medical officials said, in the latest in a wave of attacks in the country this month.

A bomb exploded near the garden of a house in Madain, and the second one detonated after people gathered at the site, an interior ministry official said.

A medical source said that two hospitals had received eight bodies and that 18 people had been wounded in the blasts, while the official said eight people were killed and 10 hurt.

And in Ghazaliyah in west Baghdad, a roadside bomb killed three children from the same family and wounded three other people, according to the same sources.

Wednesday's toll brings to at least 184 people killed in Iraq since June 13 – more than the number of people killed in all of May.

Attacks on June 13, which killed 72 people across the country, were later claimed by Al-Qaeda's front group, the Islamic State of Iraq.

Two car bombs targeting Shia Muslims commemorating the death of a revered imam killed 32 people in the capital on June 16.

Two days later, a suicide bomber killed 22 people in an attack on Shia mourners in Baquba, north of Baghdad.

And at least 12 people were killed by roadside bombs, a suicide car bomb and a shooting on June 22, and 12 more killed in two bombings on June 25.

Violence has declined significantly since its peak in 2006 and 2007, but attacks remain common, killing 132 people in May, government figures show.

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26. [Special Interest, Syria] What War In Syria Looks Like: Journalist Killings, Deadlier IEDs (Videos)

Wednesday, June 27 2012

<http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Backchannels/2012/0627/What-war-in-Syria-looks-like-journalist-killings-deadlier-IEDs>

Events in Syria are rapidly unraveling. Earlier today President Bashar al-Assad abandoned his claims that the regime was merely fighting terrorists sent by foreign powers to destabilize Syria and said the country is in a "real state of war." Today some of the war's heaviest fighting near Damascus took place and a pro-Assad television station about 12 miles south of the capital was overrun by rebels, who killed employees there.

While Mr. Assad's military has fought ferociously to put down the rebellion, using the heaviest mortars in the world and launching artillery barrages on majority Sunni towns like Hama and Homs, there has been some restraint. So far there has been no repeat of the Hama massacre of 1982, when Assad's father and predecessor, Hafez al-Assad, leveled much of that city to put down an Islamist uprising, killing more than 10,000 Syrians.



The younger Assad's acknowledgment of the war around him today could signal a turn to more ruthless tactics. If that happens, it will be against an armed opposition that has steadily grown more lethal in recent months, with arms paid for by the Sunni monarchies of Saudi Arabia and Qatar flowing to the rebels, an increasing tempo of attacks on government security forces, and an increasing adoption of the tactics that Sunni insurgents employed with devastating effect against US forces and their allies in the war in Iraq. At the moment, both sides see the total destruction of the other as the way to end the war.

An international meeting is scheduled in Geneva for this weekend at which world powers will discuss Syria. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton says she has "great hope" for a positive outcome. But with Syrian ally Iran excluded from the talks and Syrian enemy Saudi Arabia, which is backing the rebels, not expected to attend, she will probably be disappointed.

Syria was a major entry point for foreign jihadis into Iraq during the height of the war there, and it was presumed that Assad's regime turned a blind eye to the Syrian, Egyptian, and Libyan fighters passing through his territory. After all, the US had been grumbling about regime change in his country, so anything that kept US troops tied down next door was to his advantage.

But veterans of the Iraq conflict have now joined the fight against Assad, who is a member of the Alawite sect – an offshoot of Shiite Islam whose followers are viewed as apostates by Sunni fundamentalists. The Alawites are a minority in Syria, but they have dominated senior government positions and the military officer corps for decades.

Among the techniques deployed by insurgents are improvised explosive devices (IEDs) against government convoys. Roadside IEDs generated most of the US casualties in Iraq, and though solid data is hard to come by, they're probably responsible for most of the more than 400 Syrian military deaths reported by the government so far this month. IEDs are popular among insurgents because they're cheap to make and are less risky to deploy than direct assaults on heavily armed regular troops.

There are also indications that the bombs are increasingly sophisticated. The Brown Moses blog, which aggregates news about Syria's war, points out growing reports of the use of explosively formed penetrator IEDs in Syria, which penetrate further than regular IEDs. David Enders reported earlier this month that some rebel groups have acknowledged to him the growing presence of EFPs in Syria.

The weapon amounts to a curved copper cap fixed over the explosives in the bomb. The explosives hit the copper cap, forcing it into a fast-moving slug of metal than can penetrate armor.

"They are hard to get and expensive," a young IED maker complained to Enders, who wrote the "former university student [spends] his days making bombs with fertilizer, mostly by packing it into empty cooking-gas containers... for targeting tanks, he packs truck axles cut in half full of explosives."

In Iraq, senior US officers complained that Iran was providing the insurgents with EFPs. But workshops for the construction of the bombs were also found inside the country, and it's axiomatic that the longer a war drags on, the more technically proficient local insurgents become in the manufacturing of bombs. In the case of Syria, Iran is an ally of the Assad regime. There are also indications of workshops to build the explosives inside Syria, as this video purports to show.

< Video: <http://youtu.be/59OFX1kub9U> >

The assault on the pro-Assad TV station this morning is also a reminder that it's not just civilians on the rebel side that are being killed in the expanding war. At least three people were killed in the assault on the Ikhbariya TV station and there were claims that the rebels took hostages, although this has not been confirmed. Supporters of the uprising said the attack was appropriate, since Ikhbariya is a government propaganda outlet.

Propaganda is indeed a major part of the regime's survival effort. But when foreign journalists Remi Ochlik and Marie Colvin were killed in a government artillery barrage on a rebel-held section of Homs earlier this year, there were howls of outrage from the opposition. The two were part of a group traveling with the rebels, staying in a flat that amounted to an information hub for the local uprising. The information war cuts both ways, and is due to continue.

From a tactical perspective, the ability of rebels to strike at a major regime symbol so close to Damascus could signal real trouble for Assad – if they manage to follow up with further assaults. While there have

been few signs of the regime crumbling from within, there have been reports of more defections in recent days. A loss of control of routes into Damascus would increase the pressure on Assad and plant seeds of doubt among more of his supporters – something he will fight desperately to avoid.

I covered the Iraq war for five years, at the height of the sectarian war between Sunnis and Shiites. Syria, with its ruling Alawite minority and majority Sunni population, already seems pointed down that ugly road. The below video purports to be of successful rebel IED attacks on government forces, practically indistinguishable from the sort of propaganda that Sunni insurgents issued about their attacks in Iraq.

< Video: <http://youtu.be/OfIs8XbSSsY> >

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27. [Attack, Iraq] Iraq Bomb Attacks Kill 15, Wound Scores

Thursday, June 28 2012

<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2012/Jun-28/178566-9-killed-in-bombings-around-iraqi-capital.ashx#axzz1z6TsVQUL>

Bombings in and around Baghdad killed 15 people and wounded more than 50 on Thursday, the latest in a wave of sectarian attacks in Iraq, hospital sources and police said. In the deadliest, at least eight people were killed and 30 wounded when a bomb in a parked taxi exploded at the entrance of a Baghdad market in the mainly Shi'ite Muslim district of Washash, police said.

"There were bodies scattered everywhere. Glass and vegetables covered the whole place," said police officer Ahmed Nouri, who was on patrol nearby when the bomb detonated. "I feel like my clothes are completely covered in blood and the smell of it is in my nose," he said.



"Most of the victims were vendors setting up their produce in the early hours before shoppers arrived. In some places you cannot tell the blood from the (pulverised) vegetables," he said.

Violence in Iraq has fallen since a peak in 2006-07 following the 2003 U.S. invasion but insurgents remain capable of lethal attacks. More than 150 people have been killed in June across the country in a rise in attacks targeting mainly Shi'ite pilgrims and shrines.

Iraq's Shi'ite, Sunni and Kurdish factions have been locked in political disputes since the last U.S. troops withdrew in December, aggravating existing tensions.

A separate car bomb attack in Taji, a town 20 km (12 miles) north of the capital, killed four and wounded 20 early on Thursday, police said. The bomb in the mainly Sunni town was targeting a government building, which was severely damaged.

Another bomb on a roadside targeting a police patrol killed one and wounded five in Abu Dsheer, a Shi'ite area in southern Baghdad, police said.

While most recent attacks have centred around the capital, bombers also struck Fallujah, 50 km (32 miles) west of Baghdad on Thursday.

A suicide bomber killed two police officers and wounded four others after an attack targeting a government compound, police said. They also reported that three more police officers had suffered injuries in a separate attack to the south of the city when a bomb in a parked car blew up.

Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki said on Wednesday he will call for early elections if other political parties refuse to negotiate to end a crisis over power-sharing that threatens to stoke sectarian tensions even more.

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28. [Attack, Syria] Bomb Explodes In Center Of Damascus

Thursday, June 28 2012

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/bomb-explodes-in-center-of-damascus/2012/06/28/gJQAnKPw8V_story.html

A bomb exploded in the center of Damascus on Thursday, causing no deaths but underscoring the extent to which the country's crisis is now reaching into the heart of the Syrian capital.

The bomb went off in the parking lot in front of the Justice Palace, just outside the walls of the historic Old City, in the middle of the day when the area is typically crowded with shoppers and government workers.

The state news agency SANA said three people were injured in what it called "a terrorist blast." State television broadcast pictures of blazing cars ignited by the explosion, and a plume of black smoke rising from the center of the city.

Meanwhile, the Associated Press reported that Turkey on Thursday deployed anti-aircraft guns along its border with Syria, citing state television footage. Tension has been high between the two countries since Syria last week shot down a Turkish military jet that Turkey said strayed briefly into Syrian airspace

Scores of people have died in recent months in a wave of explosions in Damascus, some of them suicide bombings reminiscent of al-Qaeda-linked attacks in Iraq, that have been claimed by a new and shadowy jihadist organization called the Al-Nusra Front.

Many of the victims in those attacks were civilians, but in most cases the target appeared to be branches of the Syrian security services engaged in the suppression of the 15-month old uprising against President Bashar al-Assad's rule.

The Justice Palace contains the city's main court, and though this blast appeared to have been smaller, it was the first to target the historic city center at a time when it would be busy with civilians. The blast was also just across the street from the ancient Hamidiyeh souk, the traditional market whose merchants engaged in an unprecedented strike late last month in a sign that sentiment is swinging against Assad even in the capital.

The bombing came after an assault on a privately owned TV station in a town 14 miles south of Damascus in which three journalists and four security guards were killed, suggesting that rebels are now beginning to target civilian institutions associated with the regime. The rebel Free Syrian Army claimed however that the attack was staged by defecting soldiers, who clashed with security services guarding the TV station.

Many areas of the countryside outside Damascus have effectively been out of government control for months, and the Syrian army has been pounding several suburbs with artillery and tank fire for weeks in an effort to crush the rebellion.



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29. [Security, Ireland] Several Viable Explosive Devices Made Safe By Army In Limerick

Monday, June 25 2012

<http://www.rte.ie/news/2012/0622/suspect-devices-made-safe-by-army-in-limerick.html>

An army bomb disposal team has made safe a number of viable explosive devices in Limerick City.

Some properties had to be evacuated when the viable devices were found as part of a Garda search of an overgrown area close to a residential estate in the Ballysimon area of Limerick city.

A bomb disposal team was deployed to the scene at around 3.50pm following a request from the Gardaí.

The devices were rendered safe at the scene without the need for a controlled explosion.

They have now been removed to a secure military location for further examination and technical inspection in order to confirm their viability, the Defence Forces have said. The devices will then be handed over to the Gardaí as part of their investigation.

This was the 104th call out for the bomb disposal teams so far this year.

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30. [Special Interest, Norway] Al-Qaida Trains Norwegian To Attack

Tuesday, June 26 2012

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5hZCrdGVfxkc5BkN9MJRjLo3rrGcg?docId=d6679bb2854141d6b030c48eb298eb7e>

A Norwegian man has received terrorist training from al-Qaida's offshoot in Yemen and is awaiting orders to carry out an attack on the West, officials from three European security agencies told The Associated Press on Monday.

Western intelligence officials have long feared such a scenario — a convert to Islam who is trained in terrorist methods and can blend in easily in Europe and the United States, traveling without visa restrictions.

Officials from three European security agencies confirmed Monday the man is "operational," meaning he has completed his training and is about to receive a target. All spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the case publicly. They declined to name the man, who has not been accused of a crime.

"We believe he is operational and he is probably about to get his target," one security official said. "And that target is probably in the West."

A security official in a second European country confirmed the information, adding: "From what I understand, a specific target has not been established."

European security services, including in Norway, have warned in recent years of homegrown, radicalized Muslims traveling to terror training camps in conflict zones. Many of the known cases involve young men with family roots in Muslim countries.

But the latest case involves a man in his 30s with no immigrant background, the officials said. After converting to Islam in 2008, he quickly became radicalized and traveled to Yemen to receive terror training, one of the officials said. The man spent "some months" in Yemen and is still believed to be there, he said.

The official said the man has no criminal record, which would also make him an ideal recruit for al-Qaida.

"Not even a parking ticket," he said. "He's completely clean and he can travel anywhere."

The official would not specify what preventive measures were being taken but said "there is a well-established relationship between Western security services, and they share the information needed to prevent terrorism."

The officials declined to specify what makes them think the man is operational.

Signs that a would-be jihadist is ready for an attack could include the creation of so-called martyrdom videos for release online in conjunction with an attack, or an abrupt cutoff of communication and contacts with peers to avoid detection.

The man has not been accused of a crime in Norway, where traveling abroad to attend terror training camps is not a crime per se. In many European countries, suspects are not named unless they have been formally charged with a crime.

Yemeni military officials said they had information on Europeans training with al-Qaida in the southern part of the country but that they weren't aware of a Norwegian being among them. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the media.

CIA and FBI officials in the U.S. declined to comment on the AP report.

Trond Hugubakken, a spokesman for Norway's PST security service, also declined to comment on the case. He referred to a PST security assessment in February, which highlighted that "several" Islamic extremists have traveled from Norway to conflict zones to attend training camps.

Hugubakken acknowledged that converts who turn to violent extremism pose a particular challenge.

"Converts will have a different level of cover, especially if they have no criminal record," he said, adding that most Muslim converts do not turn to extremism.

There are several examples in Europe and the U.S. of converts linked to terror plots, from failed shoe-bomber Richard Reid, a British convert, to a Pennsylvania woman dubbed "Jihad Jane," who pleaded guilty last year to charges that she plotted to kill a Swedish cartoonist who caricatured Islam's Prophet Muhammad.

Norway saw the first convictions under its anti-terror laws this year when two men were given prison terms in January for plotting to attack a Danish newspaper that also had caricatured the Prophet Muhammad.

In March, Mullah Krekar, a radical Iraqi-born cleric who came to Norway as a refugee, was sentenced to five years in prison for making death threats against Norwegian officials and three Kurdish men he claimed had insulted Islam.

But Norway's most serious attacks happened last year at the hands of a right-wing, anti-Muslim extremist, Anders Behring Breivik, who admitted to killing 77 people in a bombing-and-shooting massacre on July 22. The self-styled militant's trial ended last week with conflicting claims about whether he is criminally insane. A verdict has been set for Aug. 24.

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31. [Attack, Bulgaria] Bomb Blast Rocks Bulgarian Town Of Sandanski

Friday, June 29 2012

<http://sofiaglobe.com/2012/06/29/bomb-blast-rocks-bulgarian-town-of-sandanski/>

One man was severely injured in a bomb blast that rocked the town of Sandanski in southwestern Bulgaria on June 29. The man was taken to hospital and was in intensive care, having suffered extensive damage to one arm and his stomach, news agency Focus reported, citing doctors at the Sandanski hospital.

The bomb blast occurred shortly before 6am local time, in front of the local office of the Euroroma political party, reports said. It detonated when the man picked up a package left in front of the building, reports said.

“I hope that this is not politically-motivated. We are reasonable enough people in Bulgaria, a member state of the European Union and Nato, not to solve our political differences with bomb blasts, so I have no explanation for what has happened,” Euroroma leader Tsvetelin Kunchev told private television station bTV.

Kunchev is a controversial figure in Bulgarian politics – a former MP, he was tried and found guilty of kidnapping and causing grievous bodily harm in 2001. He was paroled two years later and, in 2005, then vice president Angel Marin pardoned him, cancelling the suspended sentence, in a case widely seen at the time as a political deal struck between Kunchev and then-president Georgi Purvanov for Roma votes in the 2006 presidential election.

Interior Minister Tsvetan Tsvetanov said that the police were investigating the case with the assumption that it was criminally-motivated. “The theory that the [police] are working with is that it was a criminal act,” Tsvetanov told Focus.

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32. [Security, India] Hideout Busted, Huge Cache Of Arms Recovered In Poonch

Saturday, June 23 2012

<http://news.webindia123.com/news/Articles/India/20120624/2010382.html>

Security forces today busted a militant hideout and recovered a haul of cache of arms and ammunition in bordering Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir, official spokesman said. 'A joint operation was launched by the Rashtriya Rifle troops in Sanai Forest area of Surankot and a militant hideout was busted,' the spokesman said. He said bombs and IED's were also recovered from the hideout. The other recoveries included two AK 47 Rifles with 60 rounds of AK 47 ammunition, one Rifle Double Bore (Sniper), six Grenades (of Chinese origin), two Magazines of AK 47 series weapons (filled), one UBGL launcher with four Grenades, 200 rounds of PIKA Ammunition. 'Troops also recovered a pipe bomb and few clothes, cells and detonator wire which could have been used as an IED to cause large scale destruction,' he added.

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33. [Security, India] Huge Cache Of Arms, Ammunition And Explosives Recovered Kashmir

Sunday, June 24 2012

<http://news.webindia123.com/news/Articles/India/20120624/2010518.html>

The Indian Army has confirmed the recovery of a huge cache of arms, ammunitions and explosives during a search operation in Sanai forest area in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir.

Informing media about the recovery, Brigade Commander of Romeo Force 6, Sector Surankote, Brigadier S N Shanbhag, said the troops recovered two AK-47 automatic rifles with 60 rounds, 200 rounds of Pika ammunition, a double sniper bore rifle, six Chinese grenades, two AK-47 filled magazines, a UBGL launcher and four grenades.

"We busted a big hideout from where we recovered large quantity of arms, ammunitions and explosives. It includes two AK rifles, magazines, 60 round ammunitions, under barrel grenade launcher, IED, 12 bore arms and many of their essential items like medicines and synergies," said Shanbhag.



The jungles in the hilly terrain of this area are known to be a hub of militancy. Shanbhag added that the recovered material had the potential to cause large-scale destruction to life and property; however, the army has destroyed the explosives.

"We had received information since a long time that one or two militant movement is being seen in this area and our personnel had been following them from last three-four months. I would like to congratulate my troops that because of their courage, these arms, ammunitions and explosives have been recovered. The recovered explosives devices, which could have caused huge damage to the public, have been destroyed," added Shanbhag.

The row over Kashmir remains an emotionally charged issue for both India and Pakistan. The restive region has witnessed numerous militant attacks, insurgency, and infiltration attempts from across the border in the last two decades.

The Himalayan region is one of the world's most militarised zones, with India deploying more than 1.3 million troops to quell the rebellion that triggered off in 1989. The region broke out in armed rebellion against New Delhi's rule two decades ago. But while militancy has weakened over the years, the tactic of mass street protests has grown.

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34. [Security, Sri Lanka] Explosives Recovered By Vavuniya Police

Tuesday, June 26 2012

<http://www.dailynews.lk/2012/06/26/sec04.asp>

Vavuniya Police on Saturday recovered a large haul of explosives including 30 kgs of C4 high explosives and 329 kgs of C4 powder at Wellamullivaikkal. Police detected the stock of explosives hidden in the ground when they carried a search operation in the area. Meanwhile, Erawur Police after a search operation recovered five pressure bombs in a grassy area in Punnakuda on Sunday.

On the same day, Mullaitive Police detected 980 bullets and a locally made bomb weighing 10 kgs near a tank bund in Tantiruttu.

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35. [Law Enforcement, India] Police Arrest Seven Maoists, Recover Arms In Ranchi

Wednesday, June 27 2012

<http://news.webindia123.com/news/Articles/India/20120627/2012220.html>

Jharkhand Police has arrested seven Maoists and recovered a huge arms and ammunition cache from their hideout near here.

Speaking to media, Senior Superintendent of Police, Saket Kumar Singh, said, "In a joint operation between Ranchi Police, Khunti Police and CRPF (Central Reserve Police Force) 196, we arrested seven people in total, out of which three, are associates of Kundan Pahan, and the rest four, are arms suppliers."

Police said 3,795 electronic detonators, about 9,800 ordinary detonators, one ton of explosives, including nine quintals of ammonium nitrate, 1900 meters of fuse wire, six gelatin pieces, 20,000 rupees, four mobile sets and a motorcycle were recovered during the operation.

Over the last few years, the Maoists have stepped up their attacks against the government and locals. People have complained about increased Maoist killings and abductions.

According to certain reports, the Maoists are facing an acute shortage of personnel in central and eastern India due to security operations launched by the government to neutralize insurgent activity in 20 of India's 28 states.

Maoists have a significant presence in the tribal and rural regions of Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Orissa.

DEADLY MIX

<p>ARSENAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1,095kg ammonium nitrate ● 20,000 gelatine sticks ● 3,795 electronic detonators ● 9,838 ordinary detonators ● 1,900 metre fuse wire ● 4 mobile phones 		<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ammonium nitrate (or black ash), a low-impact explosive, is used as oxidising agent ● Gelatine sticks, which look like cigarettes, are high-impact explosives, which go off easily ● When gelatine sticks are used with ammonium nitrate, the impact is massive
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The seized detonators and fuse wires at Namkum police station on Tuesday.
Picture by Prashant Mitra

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36. [Security, United States] Bazooka Round Discovered In Bag At DFW

Friday, June 22 2012

<http://blog.tsa.gov/>

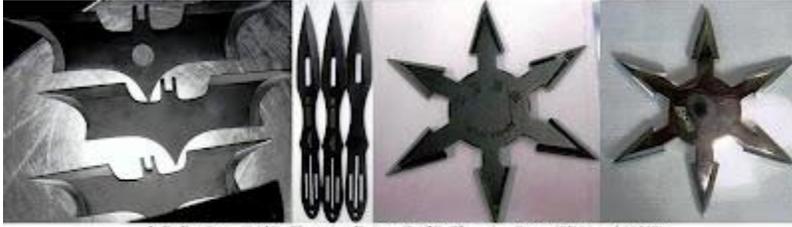
Bazooka Round: After an alarm on checked baggage at Dallas Fort Worth (DFW), TSA Officers discovered an old military bazooka round. Not knowing if this was live or inert, Law Enforcement Officers established a 100-foot perimeter around the item and evacuated the baggage area and terminals near the item. An explosive ordinance disposal team put the item in a containment box and moved it to a remote location where they deemed the item inert. After all was said and done, 5 flights were delayed 1 hour, 23 minutes, affecting an unknown number of passengers. This is why we highly encourage people to contact us before flying with items such as this before they get to the airport, so they don't inconvenience themselves and others.



IED Training Aid Discovered at Norfolk – An Improvised Explosive Device (IED) training aid was discovered in a passenger's checked baggage at Norfolk (ORF). As I've said before, we're all too familiar with instructors and other people in this type of business needing these types of items for their jobs, but as with all inert training items and replicas, we don't know they're not real until we've gone through all the motions. These motions can include evacuated baggage areas and closed checkpoints which lead to delays and missed flights. People that need to travel with INERT items should plan ahead and contact their preferred shipper about mailing the training aids to their destination.



Holy Bat Stars, Batman – These bat stars are exactly what you would need in your arsenal when fighting diabolical crime; however, they're not OK to take on a plane. These were found at San Diego (SAN). Throwing stars were also discovered at AUS, DCA, and SEA and throwing knives were discovered at LAX.



L-R: Bat Stars (SAN), Throwing Knives (LAX), Throwing Stars, (SEA) and (AUS)

Eau de Kaboom – A bottle of cologne in the shape of a grenade was discovered in a passenger’s carry-on bag at San Diego (SAN). On the X-ray, it looked like a regular hand grenade, so it took time to clear. In addition, two training grenades were discovered after an alarm in checked baggage at Norfolk (ORF). The passenger at ORF also had 4 magazines loaded with 120 .223 rounds. And if that’s not enough, two other inert grenades were discovered in a carry-on bag at Savannah (SAV). Read [here](#) and [here](#) for more information on why inert items cause problems at checkpoints. We don’t know they’re inert until we check them out and checking them out can often inconvenience your fellow passengers.



L-R: Training Grenades (ORF), Cologne Grenade (SAN), Inert Grenades (SAV)

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37. [Security, United States] Chemicals, Other Bomb-Making Material Found In Saudi Man's Apartment

Friday, June 22 2012

http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/agent-chemicals-other-bomb-making-material-found-in-saudi-mans-apartment/2012/06/22/gJQAKPqAwV_story.html

Federal agents who searched the Texas apartment of a Saudi man accused of gathering materials to make a bomb found sulfuric acid and nitric acid, among other things, an FBI agent testified Friday.

During the first day of testimony in the trial of Khalid Ali-M Aldawsari, Special Agent Aaron Covey walked jurors through the 22-year-old former chemical engineering student's apartment in West Texas using photos taken hours after Aldawsari's Feb. 23, 2011, arrest. Prosecutors contend Aldawsari gathered bomb components with the goal of targeting sites across the U.S.

Prosecutors presented more than 80 exhibits Friday, many of them photos that gave jurors a first look at Aldawsari's sparsely furnished apartment near Texas Tech University. In addition to the bottles of sulfuric and nitric acids, prosecutors showed photos of cellphones, Christmas lights, journals and notebooks, a laptop computer, wiring, a stun gun, a hazmat suit and a baby scale.

Aldawsari faces up to life in prison and a \$250,000 fine if convicted of attempted use of a weapon of mass destruction. Investigators say the targets he researched included the Dallas home of former President George W. Bush, dams and nuclear plants.

Defense attorney Dan Cogdell argued that though Aldawsari had intent, he never took a "substantial step" to make or use a bomb. Under cross-examination, Covey confirmed that none of the bottles of sulfuric and nitric acid had been opened.

Cogdell also asked Covey about a third chemical Aldawsari allegedly had tried to obtain to make a bomb.

"In that time did you find any phenol?" Cogdell asked.

"No," Covey testified.

Testimony was scheduled to resume Monday.

Aldawsari came to the U.S. in October 2008 from Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, to study chemical engineering at Texas Tech University in Lubbock. He transferred in early 2011 to nearby South Plains College, where he was studying business. A Saudi industrial company, which was not identified in court documents, paid his tuition and living expenses.

In his opening statement earlier Friday, Cogdell called his client a failure who never presented a true threat.

"Was he a lone wolf or was he a loser alone?" Cogdell asked. "I think the evidence will show he was a loser alone who failed."

Cogdell said one word came to mind in describing his client: Failure.

“He’s a failure academically,” Cogdell said. “He’s a failure at relationships.”

Prosecutor Jeffrey Haag described “10 blocks of evidence” he would present to the jury, including emails, writings and recordings of phone conversations in which Aldawsari described his desire to attack Americans.

“Maybe they deserved 9/11 and maybe it should happen again and again because these people actually deserve it,” Aldawsari allegedly said, according to Haag.

Aldawsari sat quietly in the courtroom during Friday’s testimony, looking up occasionally as photos of his apartment were shown. At one point, he wrote for several minutes on a legal pad, though he never passed anything to his defense team.

Authorities say they were tipped to Aldawsari’s online purchases by chemical company Carolina Biological Supply of Burlington, N.C., and shipping company Con-way Freight on Feb. 1, 2011. The chemical company reported a \$435 suspicious purchase to the FBI, while the shipping company notified Lubbock police and the FBI because it appeared the order wasn’t intended for commercial use.

Prosecutors played recordings of a frustrated Aldawsari complaining to the supply company when his order was held up. “They keep asking me why I’m using this product,” Aldawsari is heard telling a customer service employee. The employee told Aldawsari that the company couldn’t ship hazardous materials on a personal credit card.

Aldawsari became a familiar caller as he grew angrier. One worker is heard telling another, “I have Khalid. He’s hotter than a firecracker.” Workers were eventually instructed to always transfer Aldawsari’s calls directly to a supervisor’s voicemail.

Court documents say Aldawsari wrote in Arabic in his journal that he had been planning a terror attack in the U.S. even before he came to the country on a scholarship, and that it was “time for jihad,” or holy war. He bemoaned the plight of Muslims and said he was influenced by Osama bin Laden’s speeches.

FBI bomb experts have said they believe Aldawsari had sufficient components to produce almost 15 pounds of explosive — about the same amount used per bomb in the London subway attacks that killed scores of people in July 2005.

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38. [Attack, Mexico] Seven Injured In Grenade Blasts In Northern Mexico

Saturday, June 23 2012

<http://latino.foxnews.com/latino/news/2012/06/23/7-injured-in-grenade-blasts-in-northern-mexico/>

Three grenade blasts - two of them targeting banks - left seven people injured in this northeastern Mexican city, officials said.

The Tamaulipas state Attorney General's Office said the three explosions occurred before midday Friday in different parts of the state capital, while another explosive device was deactivated.

It said the first grenade was detonated inside an HSBC bank branch at a shopping center, injuring six people and damaging the customer service area.

The second attack outside a branch of the Banamex bank, a Citigroup subsidiary, injured one person and caused damage to the building and four parked cars.

No one was hurt in the third grenade blast, which occurred on a street between two official vehicles that were parked outside a home.

The fourth grenade, discovered in the parking lot of a federal building, was deactivated by army and federal police explosives experts.

In an operation immediately after the attacks, state and federal police detained a suspect identified as Juan Bernardo Zapata, 21, who has prior convictions for vehicle theft and for serving as a lookout for drug-trafficking gangs, the state AG's office said.

He was riding a motorcycle at the time of his arrest.

Mexico's Attorney General's Office is joining state authorities in the investigation because the use of explosives is a federal crime.

Last month, seven police were injured in Tamaulipas in a grenade blast a roadside hotel in the city of Nuevo Laredo.

In March, a car bomb exploded outside the offices of the Expreso newspaper in Ciudad Victoria; no one was harmed in the explosion, which caused damage to buildings and vehicles.

Tamaulipas, which borders the U.S. state of Texas, is a key smuggling corridor being fought over by Mexico's most powerful drug cartels, including the Zetas gang and an alliance of the Sinaloa and Gulf mobs.

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39. [Special Interest, Canada] Synchrotron Researcher Using Silicon To Deter Bomb Threats

Tuesday, June 26 2012

<http://metronews.ca/news/saskatoon/277816/synchrotron-researcher-using-silicon-to-deter-bomb-threats/>

John McLeod, a University of Saskatchewan PhD candidate, has been investigating mesoporous silicon as a potential touch-free bomb detector at the Canadian Light Source national synchrotron research centre.

The synchrotron allows researchers to isolate beams of intense light, providing researchers an effective way of understanding a material's structure. After McLeod placed silicon that had been exposed to explosives into a beamline, he and his team discovered that despite the two materials not making physical contact, silicon reacted to airborne particles from the explosive.

"Not only could you deploy this at airports, but out in the field, too. In a war zone you could have hidden detectors around all the streets so you could conceivably track a shipment of explosives," said McLeod.

The application of silicon in the field of bomb detection is ripe with potential. Not only can silicon detect explosive particles more precisely than technology currently found in airports like chemical swabs or bulky machines but the technology also displays promise in the area of cost-effectiveness.

Airport detection mechanisms often have the tendency to detect harmless compounds, mistaking them for real explosives.

"They have a fairly high rate of false positives and will think there is something dangerous there but in fact is not," said McLeod. "It could be something that is chemically similar but is more common. Different types of gels or bath products can have similar properties."

Trinitrotoluene (TNT) and military grade explosive Cyclotrimethylenetrinitramine (RDX) are two specific explosive compounds that can be detected by silicon.

McLeod is excited to be a part of research that could save lives and prevent terrorism.

"It's extremely cool and is the reason why I do this kind of work," he added.

McLeod and his colleagues now face the daunting task of furthering this research and devising a method to apply this technology practically.

Since the beamline at the Canadian Light Source is currently the only method to see how explosive particles and silicon react, researchers will now need to find a more compact device to perform this task if McLeod's research is to find any real world application. McLeod said it could be years before this is accomplished but said that research into using a laser cased within layers of silicon wafers is a possibility.

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40. [Security, Colombia] Navy Finds 98 'FARC' Grenades In Southwestern Colombia

Tuesday, June 26 2012

<http://colombiareports.com/colombia-news/news/24785-navy-finds-98-farc-grenades-in-southwestern-colombia.html>

The Colombian navy found 98 grenades of various calibers allegedly belonging to the guerilla group the FARC in the southwestern department of Nariño, reported radio station Santa Fe on Tuesday.

According to the navy, the weapons stash was discovered after a river patrol unit intercepted two FARC guerrillas who were travelling on a small boat in a local river near the Pacific town of Tumaco.

The alleged FARC members fled the scene by foot and left the boat and the war material behind them, the navy reported.

In addition to the grenades, two army uniforms and 63 7.62mm bullets were found.

The weapons stash allegedly belonged to the FARC's mobile column "Daniel Aldana," considered to be active in much of the Pacific part of the Nariño department.

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41. [Trend, Colombia] Girl's Capture Highlights FARC's Use Of Minors

Wednesday, June 27 2012

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hsW7eGmC0H9OonBUhDKpwkEEsXA?docId=CNG.d3102693c6a7245984356b443160e963.aa1>

The capture of a wounded girl in camouflage paint and with explosives provided by FARC guerrillas has raised fears that Colombia's half century old conflict may be taking an ominous new turn.

While the leftist guerrilla group has long been accused of recruiting minors to its ranks, a video aired this week by the Colombian police appeared to show for the first time they are now being used in combat operations rather than in support roles.

Taken in the province of Norte de Santander, the images shows a wounded girl and the body of a boy who were captured after detonating explosives that killed seven police in a passing patrol.

The girl is shown with a leg wound, her half-naked body covered in green paint, a technique used by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia to hide in the jungle.

"She was in a state of severe anemia and appeared to be barely 12 years old," Colonel Eliecer Camacho, the police chief in the region bordering Venezuela, told AFP.

The girl, however, who has a cousin in the ranks of the FARC, said in the hospital that she was recruited four years ago at the age of 14.

The boy's torn body, also painted green, was found in the same place after he detonated an explosive that killed seven police officers in a passing patrol, Camacho said.

The girl told authorities they had been put through an "inhuman training over eight months," the colonel said.

"They were required to walk for hours without shoes to harden the soles of their feet. They were denied food and water so they could endure more," he said.

According to the police commander, the guerrillas recruit minors by trying to convince them to join voluntarily, but once in they are forced to stay.

"The recruitment of minors is not new, but their participation unfortunately is on the increase. However, this is the first time they have been used for this kind of action," said Ariel Avila, an expert at the Nuevo Arco Iris foundation.

"It is too soon to know whether there has been a change of strategy by the FARC to use minors in these commandos, or whether these are isolated cases," Avila said.

Founded in 1964, the FARC has an estimated 9,200 fighters, scattered in remote rural areas or dense jungle after a series of military setbacks over the past decade.

The rebel group rejects peace talks under the terms set by the government, which insists that they first halt the recruitment of minors, cease "terrorist" attacks and free all their hostages.

Nearly 3,000 minors registered as part of a demobilization of armed groups between 2002 and 2011, but there could be as many as 10,000 more minors in rebel ranks, according to a 2009 UN report.

After the Norte de Santander incident, Colombian authorities announced their intention to denounce the FARC in international humanitarian organizations.

The Colombian Institute of Family Wellbeing, which is responsible for protecting the rights of children, has also protested against "the use of children for suicide missions."

"It is necessary that the children and adolescents remain outside the conflict," said the institute's director, Diego Molano, who lamented that they were still being obliged to carry arms or guard hostages.

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42. [Attack, Colombia] Blast In Northern Colombia Leaves One Dead, Two Injured

Thursday, June 28 2012

<http://colombiareports.com/colombia-news/news/24841-one-dead-two-injured-in-bomb-blast.html>

An explosion in Colombia's northern Norte De Santander department killed one man and injured two others, including a young girl, early Thursday.

According to the local police commander, Col. Eliecer Camacho, the explosion in the small town of El Tarra occurred when a man accidentally detonated a bomb, ending his own life. Officials allege that the perpetrator most likely belonged to one of the leftist guerrilla groups that operate in the area, the FARC or ELN.

Police reported that it was likely that the bomb was meant to be installed in a nearby road, where security forces often pass. There have been 14 acts of violence attributed to guerrilla groups in the area so far this year.

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